

The Intelligencer.

THE WIDOW'S LOVER.

Miss Jerusha Budd was sitting all alone, in the soft, scented moonlight of the summer evening. She had turned down the light of the little hanging lamp, in order to better enjoy the hushed stillness and the stars and the fragrant air and with her hand crossed in her lap, and her quivering, peaceful little face turned towards the open window.

Jerusha was an old maid—that is, she was fast verging upon her 29th year—and she wasn't particularly pretty, nor particularly intellectual, and she was dependent on her aunt for the daily bread and making the tea and the daily cups of tea and drink, and so, according to all the popular and old established ideas, she had no business to be the heroine of a story.

But what of that? People do exist in this world just as plain, and ordinary and poverty-stricken as our little Miss Budd and a successful Providence allows them to live. Shall we be less tolerant?

She had bright brown hair, and bright hazel eyes, as a sort of set against her wide mouth and muddy complexion, and her teeth were white and regular, and her lips as red as the reddest cardinal flower that blows in the woods of August.

After all, she had something to be thankful for.

"Dear me, Jerusha, how frightfully dark it is here! Are you asleep? Do turn up the light, and bring up some wax candles, and shut the windows, unless you want to be eaten alive by the mosquitoes!"

It was the voice of Mrs. Cortland, petulant and irascible. Jerusha rose with a sigh, to obey the imperious summons. The pretty little widow was no easy task-mistress to those whom fate had placed under her command.

"There, that's more like it. Now take down my hair, and get me ready for bed. It's past twelve, and so I must go to bed. That provoking Major Rochester never came near me, though I know he was smoking his horrid cigar out on the lawn. I'll cure him of that habit, when once I'm married to him. Take care, Jerusha, do you intend to pull my hair out by the roots?"

"It was a slip of the brush, aunt. I'll be more careful in future," apologized the guilty girl, coloring a vivid scarlet.

Mrs. Cortland looked complacently at the reflection of her face and figure in the glass; a round, dimpled face, and rosy putting lips, deep blue eyes beneath deeply penciled brows, and a glossy profusion of golden hair. No wonder the widow laughed, and drew out her pretty fingers the long curls that drooped over her shoulder.

"Nobody would think I was a day over thirty," said Mrs. Cortland. "But there's a great deal in keeping one's self well preserved, and letting those odious lips and suppers and champagne and wine and port little Jerusha, you look old enough to be my grandmother!"

Jerusha signed. She would have been no true woman if she had not many a time wished for the dangerous gift of beauty.

"You shall have some of my wide black lace to fasten over your old white silk, and come in the ball-room to-morrow night," went on the widow, feeling considerably disposed.

"Thank you, aunt. I don't care to come in."

"But you must. I'll give you a pair of my solid white gloves, and you can easily get them up with a little lavender and milk; and a bunch of white rose buds from the garden will be quite dress enough for your hair. I want you to see my splendid Major Rochester!"

"Your Major Rochester, aunt?"

"As good as mine," responded the self-complacent aunt, with a sparkle of the turquoise blue eyes and a smile that captivated, he, everybody is taking of it, and congratulating me on my conquest. Mrs. Eliza says he has the sweetest place up the Hudson, and a brown stone house in New York for a winter residence. Won't it be nice? Of course you will come and live with me, Jerusha, you can't you're useful in a hundred different ways; and I never had a French maid who dressed my hair as well as you do. Then, too, you're a real knack at arranging flowers in vases, and putting the last finishing touches to one's toilet after one is dressed!"

Jerusha smiled bitterly. Where these her sole qualifications which entitled her, in her aunt's eyes to a home?

"There, that will do. My hair is brushed enough, and the friction of the brush makes me feel sleepy. I wish you would take the ruffles of those two Swiss muslin aprons to-night, Jerusha, and run the pink ribbons through the hem of my white morning wrapper, so I can wear it to breakfast. And Jerusha, don't forget the lace on my tucker—the wide Valenciennes, you know."

And Miss Cortland went singing off to her room, leaving poor Jerusha enough to do to keep her up until daylight.

How bitter the burden of dependence may sometimes be made!

row. "By Jove! but that's a joke," cried Major Rochester, in a sort of amused condescension. "The spicily, little yellow-haired rascal! And she thinks I'm in love with her! You will not leave this place until you leave it with my Jerusha!"

"But she will be so angry, Maurice!"

"Who cares for her anger, my little Jew? Not you, I am sure. But if you prefer the old-fashioned orthodox course, I'll ask her for you, and she will say 'No' to all the guardian have Maurice, since my mother died."

"Very well, I'll make a formal application, with all due form and ceremony, and when we are once married, my brown-eyed lassie, I would like to see her for any one else attempt to domineer over me!"

She looked shyly up into his face. How sweet it was to rest her own weak nature upon the unfaltering love and strength of his!

Mrs. Cortland looked marvelously innocent and pretty that night, in a toilet of sea-green crape, and tremulous hair leaves dropping from the braided curls of her golden hair; but she could not refrain from an indignant stare, when Jerusha came in, wearing the blue silk without the black lace draperies, and shrank away behind Major Rochester's portly and good-humored married sister.

"I don't wonder she tries to hide herself," inwardly mused the widow, "the poor little hussy! Never mind; she goes to-morrow, and that's settled!"

Her face softened into the most winning of smiles, as Major Rochester approached.

"You naughty, naughty truant," she laughed; "it is an age since I have seen you." "Only a day or two," said the downy-lipped Major. "Will you take my arm for a little promenade, Mrs. Cortland? I have something to say to you."

Mrs. Cortland laid the perfume of his glove, and laid lightly on his arm, and blushed "celestial rose red," even though her carefully applied rouge. The hour was come at last for which she had schemed and maneuvered for so long. Major Rochester's heart and fortune were at last to be laid at her feet!

"Mrs. Cortland," began the Major, in a remarkably straight forward sort of way, "I want to ask a very great favor of you."

"Surely," murmured the widow, glancing up at him, and then letting her eyes wander again, in her most effective manner, she can be too great for Major Rochester to ask in vain."

"To your niece Jerusha Budd," went on the dauntless Major, "and I want you to consent."

"Jerusha Budd! You engaged to my niece Jerusha! It can't be possible!"

"But I think it can," said the Major, deliberately stooping to recover the fan Mrs. Cortland had let fall in her consternation. "We are to be married immediately, but Jerusha thinks it would be proper and fitting to ask your consent, as her only living relative."

Mrs. Cortland grew pale underneath her glowing artificial roses; she felt as if she were stifling. She would have liked to tear the brown tresses from Jerusha's head; but now knew better than Mrs. Cortland, how to use her tongue as a weapon.

"You are a little impudent, as a cousin would be. She offered a hollow, gilded sort of smile."

"So I am to lose my little Jerusha? Well, dear Major, I could not give her up into better hands. The naughty girl! How I shall scold her for not sooner confiding in me!"

And as the Major turned to acquaint his betrothed with Mrs. Cortland's full consent, the widow rushed up stairs to her room, and heeded of crumpled crape and ruined confiture, went into hysterics upon the sofa; for she had been so sure of Maurice Rochester and his fortune, and no woman likes to see her pet castle in the air in ruins at her feet.

The original programme is a little changed now. Mrs. Cortland is the humble companion in Major Rochester's luxurious home, and Jerusha endures her thousand and one caprices with unvarying sweetness of temper.

"For poor aunt has been so disappointed," she says.

New York Market.

COTTON—Demand active and price advanced, middling upland, 10c.

FLAX—Wheat and flax have declined; superfine western and state 10c; common to good extra, 8c; choice, 8c; white western, extra, 8c; Ohio extra, 8c; white western, extra, 8c; Ohio extra, 8c.

WHEAT—Wheat and flax have declined; superfine western and state 10c; common to good extra, 8c; choice, 8c; white western, extra, 8c; Ohio extra, 8c.

GRAIN—Wheat and flax have declined; superfine western and state 10c; common to good extra, 8c; choice, 8c; white western, extra, 8c; Ohio extra, 8c.

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